

weather report

94°

at noon



Today

• Sunset, 8:14 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 5:32 a.m.
• Sunset, 8:13 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 77 degrees
• Humidity 24 percent
• Sky partly cloudy
• Winds south 22 mph, gusts to 26 mph
• Barometer 29.85 inches and falling
• Record High 107° (1934)
• Record Low 47° (1990)

Last 24 Hours*

High 93°
Low 59°
Precipitation —

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly cloudy with 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Low 60-65. Breezy south winds 15-25 mph and gusty. Tomorrow: thirty percent chance of afternoon thunderstorms. Partly sunny, highs 85-90. winds 15-25 mph and gusty.

Extended Forecast

Thursday through Sunday: Chance of thunderstorms with lows in the 60s and highs 85-90.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$1.96 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.86
Loan deficiency payment — 59¢
Corn — \$1.60 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.50
Loan deficiency pmt. — 49¢
Milo — \$1.98 hundredweight
Soybeans — \$3.56 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.59
Loan deficiency payment — \$1.30
Millet — \$4 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$6.75 cwt.
Loan deficiency pmt. — \$2.36
Oil new crop — \$6.90 cwt.
Confection current — \$17/10 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$13 (new crop)
(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and Prairie Pea and Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

afternoon wire

Late news from the Associated Press

1 p.m.

Oilman says loss permanent

WICHITA (AP) — The state's oil industry might never recover from last year's devastating collapse in prices, an official of the Kansas Independent Oil and Gas Association says.

Crude oil prices are moving up, but the steep drop in prices last year wiped out much of the drilling-related industry, said Robert Krehbiel, executive vice president of the oil association.

"We lost a good deal of the service industry, the basic infrastructure," Krehbiel said in a speech Monday before the Desk and Derrick Club of Wichita.

"We had over 200 drilling rigs operating in Kansas in 1984," Krehbiel said. "Last week, we had four. It gives you an idea of how many are gone. Just to get 50 to 100 back will take a tremendous investment. That's why I think we're permanently hurt."

Celebrating the Bastille



Sheriff Doug Whitson laughed with Goodland Ambassadors Dolly Irvin (left) and Debbie Martin at the Bastille Day celebration held at the Sherman County Bastille. The celebration included coffee and donuts for the public. Bastille Day is the great national holiday of France corresponding to our Independence Day. The day is celebrated locally because of the jail being called the Sherman County Bastille.

Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

Prairie dogs creating a holy mess

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

While there is no Kansas law requiring the county to control prairie dogs, Sherman County commissioners are considering their options after a landowner appeared to complain about the pesky rodents.

Commissioners agreed some people are not eradicating the animals with the vigor once seen, but were not sure what they could do.

"I think you are going to have to re-appraise all the grassland in Sherman County because of the prairie dogs," said Ivalene Stephens. "The land value has dropped to nearly nothing. We have 12 quarters of grass and are surrounded. "A couple of our neighbors do some work on controlling the problem, but most are not doing anything. We are running over prairie dogs like we used to run over jack rabbits."

She told the commissioners it was costing an estimated \$4,000 to \$5,000 per year to keep up with the problem.



New neighbors have arrived in Goodland, as a prairie dog town has sprung down in the piece of ground west of the K-27 overpass and north of the

"We had a pasture where there has not been any holes, and now we are finding a few each week," she said. "In the past, we would find about 100 holes in a pasture, but now we are finding 500-600 holes, and we cannot get to them all in a week."

"What are our options?" Commissioner Gary Townsend said there were not many options for the county because there were no law giving the county authority to control prairie dogs like there is for noxious weeds.

Noxious Weed Director Daryl West said he had been looking into the problem and found that several counties

have passed resolutions to address the prairie dog control issue. He gave the commissioners a copy of the Thomas County resolution, and said he was trying to get copies of others.

Commissioner Kenny Davis said he felt most landowners had tried to control the prairie dogs over the years, but now some are getting a bit lax.

"I think we are calling them the wrong thing," West said. "I think we should change the name to prairie rats."

"I know we must be careful not to draw the attention of the environmentalists," Stephens said, "but I don't know how much longer we can con-

tinue to fight when it seems to be a losing battle. I have come to you as the wise men of the county."

Thomas County's resolution allows the county to "hire an individual to enter upon the lands in Thomas County infested with prairie dogs and make diligent efforts to exterminate all prairie dogs thereon."

Before the county actually takes on the task, a written notice is given to the landowner or owners that prairie dogs exist on the property and they should control the rodents. The notice also says failure to begin efforts to control the prairie dogs within 15 days will cause

the county to use their agents and materials to eradicate the prairie dogs.

If Thomas County has to do the actual extermination, the landowner is billed for the labor and materials, and if the bill is not paid it becomes a tax lien against the land.

Commissioner Chuck Frankenfeld said it could be expensive for the county if the landowners did not pay.

Townsend ask West to continue looking into the other county resolutions and report back at a future meeting. He suggested the county might consider passing a prairie dog resolution after some additional investigation.

Photo by Charlie Baker/The Goodland Daily News

Abduction suspect may be 'America's Most Wanted'

By Karen Krien

The Saint Francis Herald

A man suspected of trying to abduct three young girls in the St. Francis area may be a serial rapist wanted in Colorado who has been featured twice on the television show, "America's Most Wanted."

John Puffenbarger, 51, of Aurora, Colo., was cruising around Benkelman, Neb., that Sunday afternoon when two Bird City girls, 20-year-old Jill Parch and 18-year-old Lacy Bowers, spotted a car with a driver that matched the description in a recent newspaper article.

"John Puffenbarger probably wishes he had stayed in Colorado and not traveled into northwest Kansas, because when he came to Kansas, he was caught!" said Randy Millburn, St. Francis Chief of Police, adding that officers had nicknamed the two girls "Charlie's Angels" after the television show featuring three beautiful private eyes.

Miss Parch reported that the girls followed the man around Benkelman and, had one time, met him coming toward them but he was unaware that he had been spotted. After driving around the swimming pool several times, the man headed toward Bird City on Nebraska Highway 61, which becomes K-161 at the state line.

The girls used a cellular phone to call Jenelle Bowers, mother of Lacy, who alerted Officer Stan Harp of the Bird City Police. Officer Harp, who was off duty, quickly put on some clothes and his gun and went to the highway inter-

Events lead to capture

By Karen Krien

The Saint Francis Herald

The first time that St. Francis Police officers were aware that they might have a serial rapist lurking on the streets was on June 5 when a man allegedly tried to pick up a 10-year-old girl.

The man asked her to go with him to a remote country location and offered to pay her for her assistance to help him with a task. The girl became frightened, went home and told her parents of the strange occurrence. It wasn't until the following day that the St. Francis police got wind of the event and the on-duty officer, Becky Flaney, questioned the girl and her parents.

This is how events tracked after

section to wait for the man's Nissan.

In the meantime, the two girls were following his car, staying in communication with the police.

"We really weren't scared, but were nervous on the way back (to Bird City)," said Ms. Parch. "We were told that he probably had a gun, so we stayed a good distance."

"Ms. Parch and Ms. Bowers are considered the defining turn in this nationwide manhunt," said Chief Millburn. "I am so proud of these two young women

and words cannot begin to cover my gratitude and contribution to the capture.

"If America's Most Wanted asks me, I'm referring them straight to the two most important witnesses in this case — Lacy and Jill. Angels... Yeah, that about sums up how I feel about them."

About 4:30 p.m., Mr. Puffenbarger drove through the intersection of K-161 and U.S. 36, having no idea that his life as a free man was about to end.

Officer Harp and Bird City Mayor

Ted Parch, Jill's father, were waiting as he turned west on U.S. 36. Officer Harp stopped the vehicle, then called for assistance.

St. Francis Police Sergeant Bill Snyder heard the call.

"I heard Stan call and I knew I had better hurry," said Sgt. Snyder. "I drive a six-cylinder Chevy Celebrity for my patrol car and though it is not notorious for its high speed pursuit abilities, it did the job that day and a little more."

As Sgt. Snyder rushed to Officer Harp's aid, Cheyenne County Sheriff Ben Smull was notified and responded as well.

"Sheriff Smull's office and my office try to assist each other as much as possible," said Chief Millburn. "I'm glad that everyone made themselves available for assistance — it makes me very proud of our local law enforcement."

As the officers arrived from St. Francis, Sgt. Snyder and Officer Harp approached the car and placed Mr. Puffenbarger in custody.

A search of Mr. Puffenbarger's vehicle revealed a realistic-looking BB pistol, a partial roll of duct tape, maps, ball caps, sunglasses and other evidence which may link Mr. Puffenbarger to other crimes. The vehicle was impounded as evidence and Mr. Puffenbarger was taken to the St. Francis Police Department office by Sgt. Snyder.

"One thing I noticed during all this was the innocuous appearance of the suspect and his vehicle," said Sgt. Snyder. "You wouldn't have thought

two seconds about him or the car if we hadn't known what to look for."

Chief Millburn happened to be in the area and stopped by to lend assistance to the officers.

"Here I am, riding my motorcycle back from McCook and I come upon the traffic stop of my dreams!" he said. "I couldn't believe it when I saw the car and suspect... it was a perfect match to our case."

After nearly three hours of being interviewed by Chief Millburn, Mr. Puffenbarger finally relented and admitted he was the man St. Francis police had been looking for.

"I don't remember taking a confession that felt so good," said Chief Millburn. "It was like Puffenbarger knew, and I knew, and finally he just began talking and confessing."

Chief Millburn feels that there are a lot more details which will come out in the case before it is closed. Mr. Puffenbarger it to be extradited to Colorado, where he may be charged with rape. They chief said he feels very confident that Mr. Puffenbarger will never be released from prison.

Ms. Parch felt that it was a great relief to have Mr. Puffenbarger off the streets and was glad to have been a part in his capture.

"There have been a lot of issues and areas to explore in this case," said Chief Millburn. "Our local police department and law enforcement have, in the past, caught an awful lot of criticism for a lot

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Commission votes to sell bonds for roads

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

Sherman County commissioners voted yesterday to sell bonds over the next few years to borrow money for the County Road 65 resurfacing project and the bridge replacement at Caruso.

David Warren, a financial advisor from Chapman Securities, told the commissioners they could issue about \$300,000 in arterial road general Obligation bonds each year over the next two years to finance the road resurfacing project. This was the best of the options Warren presented to the commissioners.

With the first phase of the project starting this week between Edson and the eastern county line, the timing of the bonds is an important consideration. County Attorney Mike Irvin said he favored the arterial road bonds because there was no extra protest period, and it would allow the county to get the bonds issued more quickly.

Irvin suggested the commissioners continue to take some money from the County Road and Bridge budget over the next two years to help pay for the resurfacing project.

"It will take longer if the sales tax is the only source of revenue used," he said. "I also think it is important that we told the voters that part of the property taxes would be spent on funding the project."

Officials said the Road and Bridge fund has

contributed \$123,000 to the project in this year. Commissioner Gary Townsend said he agreed the county should put about \$100,000 from the road and bridge budget into the resurfacing project to help pay it off as quickly as possible. Commissioners Kenny Davis and Chuck Frankenfeld also agreed some money for the road project should come from the asphalt portion of the road and bridge budget.

Public Works Director Curt Way estimated the total road project would cost a little over \$1 million. He said the original plan was to do the project in three phases, but it has become apparent it would cost less to make it two.

Way said Dustrol experts, who are currently doing the hot in-place recycling on the east end of the county, say the old road was in better shape than they had expected and the resurfacing should be a bit less costly than estimated. While this was good news, Way also said the costs for next year's second phase were not as easy to estimate because of the unknowns about the price of aggregate and the extent of the work to be done on the city's sections of the road.

Warren said as long as the county was going to add in some money from the road and bridge budget, there should be no problem staying within the \$300,000 level for the arterial bonds.

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