

The Goodland Daily News

THURSDAY

August 26
1999

50¢

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Twelve Pages

Goodland, Kansas 67735

weather report

91°

at noon

Today

• Sunset, 7:28 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 6:10 a.m.

• Sunset, 7:27 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 78 degrees

• Humidity 29 percent

• Sky mostly sunny

• Winds variable at 6 mph

• Barometer 30.02 inches

and falling

• Record High 106° (1926)

• Record Low 47° (1958)

Last 24 Hours*

High 96°

Low 56°

Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: clear, low near 60, light winds.

Friday: clear, high near 90, east winds at 5 to 15 mph.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: dry, low near 60, high 90 to 95.

Sunday through Monday: chance of thunderstorms, lows 55 to 60, highs in the 80s.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$2.23 bushel

Posted county price — \$2.16

Loan deficiency payment — .29¢

Corn — \$1.63 bushel

Posted county price — \$1.61

Loan deficiency pmt. — .38¢

Milo — \$2.37 hundredweight

Soybeans — \$3.97 bushel

Posted county price — \$4.01

Loan deficiency payment — .88¢

Millet — \$4 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$6.85 cwt.

Loan deficiency pmt. — \$2.87

Oil new crop — \$6.75 cwt.

Confection current — \$17/10 cwt.

Pinto beans — \$13 (new crop)

(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Sigo 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.

Reno to reopen

Waco investigation

WASHINGTON — Attorney General Janet Reno pledged today to "get to the bottom" of why it took the FBI six years to admit its agents may have fired potentially flammable tear gas canisters on the final day of their standoff with the Branch Davidian cult near Waco, Texas.

"I have no reason at this point to believe the FBI is responsible for the deaths of those people," Reno told her weekly news conference at the Justice Department. But she said she was "very, very frustrated" that six years after categorical denials by the FBI there were news reports about the use of flammable devices.

"It is absolutely critical we do everything humanly possible to learn all the facts as accurately as possible and make them available to the public," said Reno, who, along with FBI Director Louis Freeh, has ordered a fresh investigation of what transpired on April 19, 1993, at the Branch Davidian compound.

Scrimmage showcases new Cowboy teams

By Charlie Baker

The Goodland Daily News

The Goodland High School football team and cross country team will be showcased at Goodland's Cowboy stadium at 6 p.m. Friday for their annual preseason soap scrimmage.

Football head coach Mike Johnson said his team is looking good and ready for the season.

"After being in the play-offs for eight years in a row, and then missing the last two years, everyone has been feeling frustrated," said Johnson.

"Last year we lost four games, each by a touchdown or less," he said.

Johnson said he feels that the Cowboys have a chance to win every game.

"If our guys play like they can, and we coach like we should, we can win every game."

Johnson said he is really relying on his 15 seniors.

"It's their year," he said, "it is really up to them what they do with it."

"Our new coaches are all nice kids, they are starting to get settled in."

Cross country coach Don Smith said they have been working and building slowly this year.

"I think in the past we have pushed too much too early and had some injuries," he said. "We have a very inexperienced group, so I think it is best to build slowly."

The scrimmage will begin at 6 p.m., with the football team running some plays. At 6:40 the girls cross country team will take some laps.

Another group from the football team will run some plays from 7 to 7:30. The boys cross country will then take a few laps.

The football team will then run a few more plays to finish up the scrimmage.

There will be a parent meeting following the scrimmage in the stadium.

Admission to the event will be a bar of soap or a blank video tape.

There will be picture taking of the players at 5 p.m. There will also be a Black and Gold boosters membership barbecue for \$2 a plate.

Technical School looks to exceed 600 students

It will be another record-breaking year for enrollment at the Northwest Kansas Technical School, which began their 1999-2000 school year on Aug. 19.

"We are optimistic that we will exceed the 600 mark for the first time in the history of the school," Director Larry Keirns said.

There are over 600 students enrolled for classes this year, compared to the 576 students enrolled last year. This figure includes not only the students already attending, but those who will be coming later in the school year. However, this figure could fluctuate some, with students either dropping out or enrolling later on.

The fiscal year runs from July through June. The final enrollment figures will be in on Sept. 15.

"Most of the 13 programs offered on the Goodland campus are experiencing increased enrollment, with some pro-

grams filled at this point in time," Keirns said a short time before the school year began.

The school first opened in August 1964 and has seen record-breaking enrollments for most of the past ten years.

The newest programs, communications network technology and medical assistant, have had excellent enrollment, not only for this school year, but also for 2000-2001.

Keirns said that a key to the high enrollment is the upgrading of programs, such as the former business program. It covers a greater area of skills and has been renamed the Office/Computer Technology program.

The quality of technical training and graduate placement service are also major factors in the school's record enrollment for the past four years.

Gas prices soar with Labor Day holiday nearing

Topeka — Gasoline prices soared more than eight cents in the last month and are now 18 cents above what they were prior to last Labor Day holiday, according to AAA.

AAA's monthly Fuel Gauge Report shows self-serve regular unleaded gasoline averages \$1.255 per gallon, 8.1 cents higher than in July. A year ago, the pre-Labor Day average price was \$1.075.

The increase was the biggest in August since prices rocketed 11.4 cents in 1990 following Iraq's attack on Kuwait.

Self-serve mid-grade averages \$1.341 per gallon, an eight cent rise in the last month, and self-serve premium averages \$1.40, up 8.1 cents in the last month. Self-serve regular unleaded gasoline is most expensive in the West at \$1.415 per gallon, up 9.2 cents from last month and 19.2 cents higher than last August. It is least expensive in the Southeast at \$1.166 cents, up 7.4 cents this month and 18 cents from a year ago.

Youth arrested on burglary charge

The Goodland Police department served a search warrant on a Goodland residence Tuesday afternoon, recovering stolen property, and arresting a juvenile, said Police Chief Ray Smee.

"We recovered a safe and most of its contents, cash, important papers, antique coins; we also recovered compact discs, cameras, cell phones, a shotgun, and bike parts," he said.

Smee said that the value of the recovered items totaled several thousand dollars, and that there is a possibility of more arrests in the case.

Defense of prairie dogs is project's aim

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

Western Kansas and eastern Colorado are in the middle of the Great Plains — once described as the Serengeti of North America — and where a battle is developing over the future of the prairie dog.

Two hundred years ago when Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark traveled up the Missouri River the "barking squirrel" — now known as the prairie dog covered as much as 247 million acres and there were as many as five billion animals. Today experts from the Predator Project estimate only one percent of the animal's population remains in scattered prairie dog towns across the great plains.

"Most experts agree that more than 90 percent of the prairie dogs have disappeared and the number continue to decline through regular poisoning, shooting, loss of habitat and imported diseases," said Jonathan Proctor prairie dog coordinator for the Predator Project headquartered in Bozeman, Mont. "We don't want to see the species disappear and believe there is a level of tolerance which needs to be found to preserve the prairie dogs."

The prairie dog itself is not a predator, but Proctor says it is the prey for several other species which depend on the football-sized animals for food and use the abandoned holes for shelter. Among those is the black-footed ferret which lives in prairie dog burrows and the prairie dog is 90 percent of the ferret's diet. The ferret was thought to be extinct until the mid 1980s, and there have been efforts to increase the numbers in various areas of the great plains.

The mountain plover is another animal which seems to depend on the prairie dog. The plover is a shorebird that has adapted to life on the prairie. It prefers to nest on prairie dog colonies because of the low vegetation and open terrain.

Burrowing owls live in empty prairie dog burrows. The owls feed on small prairie dogs, other small animals and

Sure sign schools open soon



Phil Erickson, Tony Daise, and Shawn Nichols (left to right) City of Goodland workers, paint the crosswalk behind Central Elementary at Broadway and 13th Streets. They have been painting the crosswalks in preparation for Monday, the first day of school.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Daily News



Prairie dogs like these can be found close to Goodland and in other places in Sherman County.

Photo by Charlie Baker / The Goodland Daily News

insects and return each summer to the same home.

The swift fox, just over 2 feet long, hunts small animals, birds and insect and are often found around prairie dog towns because of the abundant food supply and the burrows provide shelter.

Biologists think the fall migration of ferruginous (reddish-brown in color) hawks is tied to prairie dog locations. This hawk eats young prairie dogs as well as the many other small rodents living on prairie dog towns.

Proctor says there is a way to save the

prairie dog and the other species if they are allowed to locate and grow on public lands throughout the great plains.

"All these animals may be endangered in the near future and would need to have federal protection.

"We are saying do it on public lands — we think it should be done on the grasslands and the Bureau of Land Management property where they could expand to a level of 10 to 20 percent and be tolerated," Proctor said.

That is not possible today as the grasslands and most other public lands are used for grazing and allow for the

Common myths and truths about prairie dogs

Myth #1: Prairie dogs are everywhere.

The Truth: Black-tailed prairie dogs historically covered between 10 and 20 percent of the Great Plains. Today, they occupy less than one percent of their historic area - and their numbers continue to decline.

and cause erosion.

The Truth: Prairie dogs actually maintain open grasslands in some regions by preventing shrubs, such as sagebrush and mesquite, from growing in these areas. Prairie dogs also can decrease erosion.

in cattle weights.

Myth #4: Prairie dogs must be controlled or they will take over the landscape.

The Truth: Under natural conditions, prairie dogs will not "take over" the landscape. Historically, black-tailed prairie dogs probably occupied between 10 and 20 percent of the Great Plains. They now occupy much less than one percent.

Myth #5: Prairie dogs are a human health threat because they spread plague to people.

The Truth: Sylvatic plague, an exotic disease imported earlier this century from Europe, has been identified in the U.S. in 76 species. Plague is one of the rarest infectious diseases in the U.S. Only 31 cases were documented as being connected with prairie dogs.